



Flathead County Agency on Aging Commissioner's Update – January 22, 2013

Story: More than a Meal! Our nutrition program saves lives as illustrated by these two recent events:

- One of the Meals on Wheels volunteer drivers did not show up for her shift in Whitefish. Concerned, the site manager called and when no one answered she contacted someone she knew had a key to the woman's home. They found her inside too ill to call for help. She was admitted to the hospital and the doctor said she was only a couple of hours from death and would not have made it if the site manager had not checked on her.
- A Meals on Wheels volunteer driver entered the home of an at-risk client with cancer and discovered his home covered in blood and him slumped in his chair unconscious. He had fallen and cut an artery in his arm and was quickly bleeding to death. The driver immediately called 911 and the man was taken to the hospital.

AOA Administration

Building

- **Thank you to the Commissioners for supporting pursuit of a \$450,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to help fund a new building to better serve Flathead Valley seniors!** The application is due in April and project awards will occur in the fall. The City of Kalispell will have to approve the application as it is their "slot."

Advisory Council

- The AOA Advisory Council meeting was held on 1/10/13.
 - The Council welcomed three new members: Commissioner Gary Krueger, Jenna Justice representing Frontier Hospice and Tracy Bridges representing Immanuel Lutheran Communities.
 - Two additional members recently resigned so there are now two vacancies.
 - AOA Director Lisa Sheppard is working with the Commissioner's Office to confirm all member appointment dates and terms as there appear to be some discrepancies.
 - Members formed an ad hoc committee to review the Council by-laws as they have not been updated since 2003 and some of the language is unclear.
 - Members expressed their continuing concern about the safety issues and functional inadequacies of the current AOA building and received an update regarding these issues that included the memo from the County Executive Risk Management Team to the Commissioners dated 12/18/12 recommending a new location based on their 12/14/12 on-site inspection; the minutes from the joint city/county Community Needs Assessment meeting on 12/18/12 with statements from AOA stakeholders emphasizing the need for a new building; the suggestion by County grant writer, Debbie Pierson, that the County consider applying for the a \$450,000 CDBG grant; and the discussion about building options scheduled for the Commissioners' retreat on 1/17/13.

- Given the number of new members, the strategic planning process for the Council will be postponed and the February meeting will focus on a comprehensive orientation to the agency and a “round table” exercise to facilitate members getting to know one another and their interests related to serving on the Council.
- Commissioners Krueger and Scott assured members that they will be working with state legislators to ensure that Flathead County receives adequate funding for senior services over the next biennium.

Strategic Planning

- We are beginning our strategic planning process this month with a staff retreat on 1/26/13. Advisory Council and other stakeholder input will follow in the coming months.

Legislative Issues

- The U.S. Congress postponed sequestration until March to buy time to reach a permanent deal. If the cuts materialize, it will mean approximately \$38,000 in reduced federal revenue to Flathead County this fiscal year.
- This session the Montana legislature will consider moving funding for aging services from One-Time-Only status into the base budget and adding an additional \$3 million dollars over the biennium.
- AOA staff participate in M4A, the association of local agencies on aging that advocates for policies and funding that support senior and long-term care services, and will attend the quarterly meeting in Helena at the end of this month.

Outreach/Education/Media Increased outreach is a goal in our Area Plan on Aging

- Ombudsman Susan Kunda was interviewed about AOA programs by a local radio station (1/7/13).
- The Daily Interlake ran a story on the safety issues at the current AOA building (1/12/13).
- The Daily Interlake ran a story on AOA Director Lisa Sheppard for the “Monday Profile.” (1/14/13)
- Fox News Montana interviewed Lisa about AOA and other local services for seniors who might be at risk for suicide. (1/14/13)
- I&R Specialist Peggy Colby participated on a panel discussion about the Montana Big Sky Home and Community Based Medicaid Waiver. (1/17/13)
- Lisa Sheppard will be interviewed about AOA programs and new directions on KGEZ on 1/28/13.

Eagle Transit

- December ridership was 7,790 compared with 7,789 in 2011. FY13 ridership to date is 46,079 up 1.5% from 2011’s total of 45,422. Annual target is 78,750 or approximately 6,562 rides per month. The average through December is 7,682 rides per month. We are on track to total more than 90,000 rides this fiscal year.
- Eagle Transit provided transportation for county employees to attend a supervisor training in Polson.
- The City Bus Route Match module will be installed in February.
- A security camera has been purchased and will be installed on one bus to test as a potential safety enhancement for all Eagle Transit buses.
- In the last three and a half years bus wrap advertising has generated more than \$100,000 in revenue for Eagle Transit. Another two buses are scheduled to be wrapped in the near future.
- Chandler Communications is working on a proposal to be presented in April for Public Service Announcements on the inside of the buses.

- The Eagle Transit Advisory Board met on 1/3/13. The Commissioners approved new member Tagen Vine, President of the Kalispell Regional Healthcare Foundation, and reappointed Carol Pike, Executive Director of the Columbia Falls Chamber of Commerce.

Nutrition

- Total meals served in December were 6,241. Congregate meals totaled 3,141 and home delivered meals totaled 3,100. There were 13 new home delivered customers and 64 new congregate customers. Total meals served this fiscal year as of December 31, 2012 were 37,724. Average meals served per month to date is 6,287, which is slightly under the FY 2012 average of 6,370 meals per month. Our target for FY 2013 is 77,250 (monthly average 6,437).

I & R

- November statistics include:
 - 307 hours of homemaker services (1,826 through 12/21/12, an average of 304 per month); our annual target is 3,675 or an average of 306 hours per month
 - 185 hours of escort/errand services (912 through 12/31/12, an average of 152 per month); there is no workload indicator for this service in the FY 2013 budget
 - 242 hours of respite (1425 through 12/31/12, an average of 238 per month); our annual target is 3,500, which averages 292 hours per month.
 - 8 new legal clients
 - 1,234 calls/walk-in assistance; our annual target is 11,220 units of service, an average of 935 per month
 - 97 telephone reassurance calls
 - 19 Ombudsman visits
 - 77 SHIP contacts
 - 41 home visits to at risk clients.
- The pace of the increased demand for services over the last several months put us on track to exceed our projected revenue. In January we started a waiting list for homemaker and escort/errand services and reviewed hours provided to existing clients for possible reduction. We are looking closely at the budget for transfer options within our III B funds and for potential cost savings to minimize the need to cut services.
- This month Peggy Colby is working with residents of area senior complexes to help them apply for the Montana Elderly Homeowner/Renter Tax Credit (2EC). For tax year 2011 she was able to obtain a total of \$58,995 in refunds for clients and \$47,913 in the 2010 tax year. Peggy says, "This is probably my favorite job to do because I get people back money they usually need desperately."
- We are pursuing inclusion on the statewide Community First Choice advisory council.

RSVP

- The Federal CNCS Grant is due and will be submitted on 1/23/13. The award amount is the same as last year at \$50,246.
- Development of the application for the United Way grant will begin in early February to be presented in April.
- Three volunteers continue to contribute a total of 15-20 hours per week to AOA.
- Current volunteer projects include promotion of the "Senior Institute" at FVCC and recruitment of new RSVP volunteers at Institute events, the All Schools Cribbage Tournament, making baby bibs to donate to KRMC, Habitat for Humanity, AARP tax aide, drivers and dispatchers for the Disabled

American Veterans, front desk assistance at the Humane Society, Flathead Industries thrift shop and various projects at the Central School Museum.

- Martin Luther King Day service projects starting 1/21/13: collect donations for the Vet Food Pantry and Read for Peace collaborative effort with Americorp.
- The RSVP Board met on 1/16/13 and welcomed new members Marge Clark and Marianne Dyon.

Senior Mobile Home Repair

- The Advisory meeting was held 1/8/13.
- Three projects were completed this month and 8 are in progress.
- We received a \$500 donation from Glacier Bank, \$1000 from the Whitefish Soroptimists and \$400 from Bev Sorenson in memory of her husband Carrol.

Senior Centers

- A primary AOA focus is outreach to area Senior Centers to build relationships, extend support, and explore new opportunities for partnership. To that end:
 - Lisa attended the North Valley Senior Center Board meeting and potluck on 1/3-4/13.
 - On 1/17/13 Lisa met with Lakeside Board members and toured the new senior center that is under construction and scheduled to open this summer.
 - A joint meeting of AOA and all of the center board presidents is scheduled for 2/11/13 (time and place to be determined) to begin a dialog on how we can best join together to meet the needs of seniors in the Flathead Valley. The goal is quarterly meetings to share ideas and plan and coordinate ongoing collaborative efforts.
 - The AOA Council has agreed to develop a Senior Center Committee
- The Kalispell Senior Center continues to struggle with the costs of building maintenance and repair, including a recent bill for \$2800 to resurface the wood floor damaged by a group that rented the space for an event. They are also facing possible eviction of their tenant due to long-term non-payment of rent which will result in a loss of \$700 per month in income. They will need to do extensive repairs to the home including repainting the exterior at a cost of at least \$3000 due to lead paint.